

### **Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

1-20. (Cancelled).

21. (New) A mold for molding a tire, comprising:

at least two sub-molds, each said sub-mold comprising a portion of a whole, predetermined shape of said mold, and each said sub-mold further comprising:

a plurality of air removal apertures formed on an interior surface of said sub-mold, each of said apertures being in communication with an exterior surface of said sub-mold such that air is discharged from blockades between a green tire present in said mold and said interior surface of said sub-mold; and

a plurality of ventlids corresponding to each said aperture, each said ventlid comprising an integral lid mechanism, said lid mechanism comprising a resilient, chemically inactive material that does not fuse with the green tire and having sufficient durability to withstand repeated use at a temperature of 100-200°C;

wherein the entirety of each said ventlid is positioned above a respective one of said apertures;

wherein said lid mechanism maintains a range of open positions by virtue of the resiliency of said lid mechanism such that air is discharged from said blockade via said aperture while said lid mechanism is in any one of said open positions, and wherein said lid mechanism assumes a closed position upon sufficient contact with the green tire in said mold, thereby sealing said aperture such that air and green tire material are prevented from entering said aperture.

22. (New) The mold of claim 21, wherein said ventlid further comprises a flexible plate member and said lid mechanism is defined by a plurality of cuts passing through said ventlid in a perpendicular direction to a surface plane of said ventlid and a lid

mechanism baseline;

wherein at least two of said cuts each extend from a substantially opposed portion of a peripheral edge of said ventlid inwardly toward a respective terminal point such that said lid mechanism baseline is defined between said terminal points of said cuts; and

wherein said lid mechanism extends outwardly from said lid mechanism baseline at a predetermined angle and away from said surface of said ventlid.

23. (New) The mold of claim 22, wherein said ventlid is fixed to a vent tube via a weld site positioned between a portion of said peripheral edge of said ventlid and said lid mechanism baseline, and wherein said vent tube is disposed in at least one of said apertures.

24. (New) The mold of claim 22, wherein said ventlid is directly fixed to a portion of said interior surface of said sub-mold via a weld site positioned between a portion of said peripheral edge of said ventlid and said lid mechanism baseline.

25. (New) The mold of claim 21, wherein said ventlid comprises a silicone elastomer or a fluorocarbon elastomer.

26. (New) The mold of claim 21, wherein said ventlid comprises a flexible plate member comprising one or more of said integral lid mechanisms;

each of said lid mechanisms being defined by at least one cut passing through said ventlid in a direction perpendicular to a surface plane of said ventlid and extending from a starting point that is spaced a distance inwardly from the periphery of said ventlid toward a terminal point that is spaced a distance inwardly from the periphery of said ventlid along one or more straight or curved lines, and a substantially straight, un-cut lid mechanism baseline extending from said starting point to said terminal point;

wherein each of said lid mechanisms extend outwardly from a respective lid mechanism baseline at a predetermined angle and away from said surface plane of said ventlid.

27. (New) The mold of claim 21, wherein each said sub-mold further comprises a vent channel in communication with a respective one of said apertures and said exterior surface of said sub-molds, and wherein each said sub-mold further comprises means for preventing said lid mechanism from being introduced into said aperture when said lid mechanism is in said closed position upon further contact with the green tire.

28. (New) The mold of claim 27, wherein said means comprises a positioning pin disposed in said vent channel and extending in an axial direction of said vent channel from a support member provided in said vent channel toward a terminal end proximate said aperture, such that a lower surface of said lid mechanism is in intimate contact with said terminal end of said positioning pin when said lid mechanism is in said closed position.

29. (New) The mold of claim 27, wherein said vent channel comprises a lip defined by an upper portion of a peripheral wall of said vent channel proximate said aperture; and

wherein said means comprises said lip, such that a portion of a lower surface of said lid mechanism contacts said lip to prevent said lid mechanism from being introduced into said aperture when said lid mechanism is in said closed position upon further contact with the green tire.

30. (New) The mold of claim 21, wherein said ventlid comprises a flexible plate member having a shape defined by a first portion and an adjacent second portion, said

first and second portions being joined along a line defining a lid mechanism baseline;  
and

wherein said lid mechanism is defined by said first portion and said lid mechanism baseline, such that said lid mechanism extends outwardly from said lid mechanism baseline at a predetermined angle.

31. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein each of said first and second portions of said ventlid are circular or elliptical, and said lid mechanism baseline comprises a tangent line between said first and second portions, said tangent line being substantially perpendicular to an imaginary line connecting a center point of each said first and second portions of said ventlid.

32. (New) The mold of claim 31, wherein said second portion further comprises an opening in communication with said aperture.

33. (New) The mold of claim 32, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is positioned such that said center point of said lid mechanism substantially coincides with said center point of said second portion of said ventlid when said lid mechanism is in said closed position.

34. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is fixed to a vent tube at predetermined locations and wherein said vent tube is disposed in at least one of said apertures.

35. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is directly fixed to said sub-mold at predetermined locations.

36. (New) The mold of claim 33, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is directly fixed to said sub-mold at predetermined locations between a peripheral edge of said second portion of said ventlid and said opening thereof.

37. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein said first portion of said ventlid is circular, elliptical, semi-circular or semi-elliptical, and said second portion of said ventlid is rectangular.

38. (New) The mold of claim 37, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is embedded in a portion of said sub-mold such that said lid mechanism corresponds to a respective one of said apertures.

39. (New) The mold of claim 37, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is fixed to at least one of a plurality of sipe blades provided in predetermined locations on said sub-mold to secure said ventlid to said sub-mold.

40. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein said first portion of said ventlid has a shape defined by a design of the shape of a periphery of a tire, and said second portion of said ventlid is substantially rectangular.

41. (New) The mold of claim 40, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is fixed to a vent tube at predetermined locations and said vent tube is disposed in at least one of said apertures.

42. (New) The mold of claim 40, wherein said second portion of said ventlid is directly fixed to said sub-mold at predetermined locations.

43. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein said first portion of said ventlid has a surface contour shape that corresponds to a surface contour shape of said interior surface of said sub-mold.

44. (New) The mold of claim 30, wherein said first portion of said ventlid further comprises a member having a surface contour shape that corresponds to a surface contour shape of said interior surface of said sub-mold disposed on an upper surface of said first portion of said ventlid.